

For Immediate Release

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Set a Quit Date and Call the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline

The Annual Great American Smokeout is November 19

Lincoln—The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services' Tobacco Free Nebraska program encourages Nebraskans who are ready to give up cigarettes, chewing tobacco or e-cigarettes to call the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline for help and support.

The American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout takes place November 19 and is a great time to join millions of other tobacco users around the country to quit or to use the day to make a quit plan. Free help is available by calling the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or visiting www.QuitNow.ne.gov.

"The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline is a free service to all Nebraska residents 16 and older," said Amanda Mortensen, Tobacco Free Nebraska program manager. "It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and it's a great resource to help people successfully quit tobacco."

In 2014, nearly 3,000 people called the Quitline, more than half the callers suffering from chronic conditions either resulting from, or made worse by tobacco use. Quitline services are available in more than 170 languages. Spanish-speaking callers may also call 1-855-DEJELO-YA (855-355-3569).

When callers first contact the Quitline, they are offered a range of services, including access to a trained telephone Quit Coach®, self-help materials, referrals to local programs or a mix of these options. If telephone counseling support is chosen, the caller is registered in the program and phone sessions are scheduled that fit with the caller's schedule. The Quit Coach® provides services including:

- Preparing participants for their Quit Date
- Helping develop an individualized Quitting Plan
- Providing tips and support to live in a smoke-free environment
- Offering information on medications that may help with withdrawal symptoms

All information provided to the Quitline is confidential and all calls and coaching sessions are free.

According to the American Cancer Society, the decision to quit using tobacco has nearly immediate results. Within 20 minutes, your heart rate and blood pressure drop. Within 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal. Within two to three months, your circulation improves and your lung function increases. After one year of living tobacco free, the excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker's. Although the health benefits are greater if you quit smoking at an earlier age, quitting any form of tobacco is good for your health at any age.

Nebraskans with Medicaid coverage are eligible for nicotine replacement medications at a reduced co-pay, generally less than \$10. People with Medicaid coverage should contact their healthcare provider about the referral process to use the Quitline.

Web-based registration for the Quitline is available at www.QuitNow.ne.gov as well as a QuitNow mobile application for smart phone users. For more information about the Great American Smokeout, visit <http://www.cancer.org/index>.